

# DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and study of old-time dime and nickel novels, popular story papers, series books, and pulp magazines

Voi. 63, No. 5

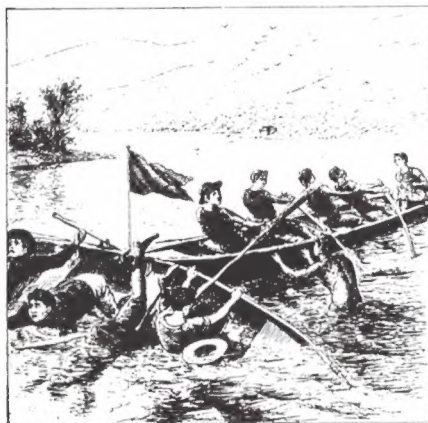
October 1994

Whole No. 629

## DIME NOVEL SKETCHES

# The Boat Club.

BY OLIVER OPTIC.



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GEORGE MUNRO'S SONS, PUBLISHERS,  
17 to 27 Vandewater Street, New York

### No. 268: THE LUCKY SERIES

Publisher: George Munro, 17 to 27 Vandewater St., New York. Issues: 114. Dates: Sept. 5, 1898 to 1905. Schedule: Weekly; later issues: quarterly. Size: 7 1/4 x 4 7/8 inches. Pages: 150. Price: 25c. Illustrations: Black and white pictorial cover. Contents: Reprints from *Munro's Girls and Boys Weekly* and *Fireside Companion*.

## THE HITCHING POST

The world of dime novels, series books, and pulp magazines is a continuum. Publishers of today produce new variants on old themes. This issue we consider the latest incarnations of a traditional detective series, The Hardy Boys, a forthcoming Nancy Drew series, and a new way to search for stories from the past. Our series on publishers for the mass market of yesterday continues with an entry on Street and Smith. Letters, Notes and Queries, and Book Reviews fill out our pages. The future? You, our readers, are a very important part of the Round-Up team and we look for your articles and letters. Our address is below.

We wish to extend our thanks to Gilbert K. Westgard II for his services as printer for this magazine the past five years.

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## Today's Hardy Boys Adventures: A Social-Developmental Analysis

Ian McMahan  
Brooklyn College, CUNY

Frank and Joe Hardy are the stars of a series of detective stories for children and teens that is surpassed for popularity only by the stories that feature Nancy Drew. The first Hardy Boys novel was published in 1927 and is still in print, in much revised form, as are almost sixty others of the original series. Moreover, while it may surprise adults who think of the Hardy Boys solely as a souvenir of their youth, new Hardy Boys adventures continue to be written and published. It is these new Hardy novels that are the focus of this discussion.

Frank and Joe still live with their father, retired New York detective Fenton Hardy, their mother, Laura, and their eccentric Aunt Gertrude, in the fictional town of Bayport, Long Island, a town described by one commentator as having "more tunnels, caves, caverns, trap doors, pits, underground harbors, coves, suspicious holes, and deadfalls than the Luray Caverns, and all but one of the thirty-five abandoned mills in the Western Hemisphere."<sup>1</sup> They are still in high school—Frank is a senior, Joe a junior—and have much the same band of friends as they had sixty years ago. However, the new Hardy books are not simple exercises in nostalgia. The settings and the activities of the characters are almost relentlessly up to date, which is doubtless

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<sup>1</sup> Henry Beard and Hugo Flesch, "Chums in the Dark" in *This Side of Parodies* (NY: Warner Paperback Library): 103.



one element in the ongoing popularity of the series. What are some others?

Two distinct series of new Hardy adventures are currently being published. The Hardy Boys Digest series is aimed at 8 to 10 year olds, and the Hardy Boys Casefiles are directed at 10 to 14 year olds. New Digest books appear every other month, and new Casefiles books every month—presumably because older children read faster and have more pocket money to buy new books. The books are of similar length—about 160 pages or 35,000 words—but there are important differences between the two series—and not only in physical format and typesize.

In preparing this study, I examined plot summaries of 38 books in the Digest series and 83 in the Casefiles, as well as doing a close reading of about a dozen books in each series. Across the two series, the central crimes range from murder, kidnapping, and larceny to espionage, embezzlement, searching for hidden loot, and even poaching. As for the criminals, they include members of organized crime, international conspirators, extortionists, and mad scientists, as well as cult members, ninjas, and generic bad guys.

Although the two series have a lot in common—setting, characters—the differences between them are marked. In the Digest books, the most common crime is "dirty tricks" against some person or organization (34%), followed by theft of some valuable object (29%) and kidnapping (16%). These three categories alone account for almost four-fifths of the books. In the Casefiles, however, the most common crime is murder (34%), followed by kidnapping (18%), theft (11%), and sabotage (10%). The guilty parties in the Digest books tend to be either commercial rivals (21%) or people tempted to crime by a particular set of circumstances (37%). In the Casefiles, they are much more likely to be members of organized crime (27%), foreign agents (14%), or generic bad guys (17%).

What can these differences suggest to us, either about the nature of the audience for these two series or about the reasons for the ongoing popularity of the books?

The first point to note is that the characteristics of the series, and the differences between them, are not accidental. They flow from decisions made by the editors and writers who produce the books, and who serve as "gatekeepers" between the immense range of possible characters and plot elements, and the audiences of readers. For example, in Hardyland, the publishers have decided that drugs and drug-related crimes do not exist, nor do sex and sex-related crimes.

The reason that murder does not happen in the Digest series is quite simple: it is not allowed by the editorial guidelines for the series. However, *attempted* murder is allowed, and that doesn't happen in the Digest books, either. Moreover, the mere fact that murder is permissible in the Casefiles does not explain why it is far and away the most common crime.

And what are we to make of the preponderance of organized crime members and foreign agents in the Casefiles, when they are essentially absent from the Digest books? There is nothing in the editorial guidelines that explicitly excludes them from the Digest series, yet whether the editors and writers are aware of it or not, in practice, they have closed the gate against these categories of villains.

The analysis I'd like to propose starts with the assumption that any product that has long-lasting popularity is the result of a process of reciprocal equilibration between the producers and consumers. That is, consumers gradually discover and adapt to what appeals to them, and producers just as gradually discover what appeals and what doesn't, and make corresponding adaptations to the product. Some critics disparage series such as the Hardy Boys as "formula fiction," but finding or developing a formula that has widespread and ongoing appeal is by no means an

easy or obvious assignment. Ask the executives and flavor chemists who were responsible for the "new Coke" debacle a few years ago.

If we accept this assumption, the characteristics of the product can tell us something about the consumer, just as the characteristics of the consumer can enlighten us about the distinctive features of the product. More specifically, I am positing that the differences between the Hardy Digest series and the Hardy Casefiles series map onto the psychological differences between prepubertal and early adolescent boys, the two audiences who have sustained the two series.

According to Piaget, the most important difference between these two groups is the transition, in early adolescence, from concrete operational to formal operational thinking. Among other things, this entails a decline in egocentrism, a corresponding rise in social perspective-taking ability, and an increase in the capacity to deal with hypothetical and even counterfactual situations. The child's inferences about, and explanations of, behavior—his own or that of others—become more complex. In particular, behaviors that a younger child might have attributed to a single, usually internal, causal factor ("He did that because he's mean," or "He did that because he's greedy."), the early adolescent may understand as the result of the interaction of personal and situational causes. ("He's not really such a bad guy, but nobody ever taught him the right way to act.")

At the same time, the breadth of the child's perspective begins to widen, from the family and immediate community to the larger society. One result is an increase in uncertainty and ambiguity. Those in one's immediate circle can be understood, and their behavior predicted, on the basis of known personal characteristics; but those who come from a different context may, even when acting according to what they consider to be worthy motives, do things that are bad.



The most obvious examples of this are those who serve organized crime or hostile foreign powers. In each case, loyalty to one's own reference group requires actions that, from the perspective of those who do not belong to the group, are evil. To a concrete operational child, this is difficult to comprehend, and consequently a distraction from the pleasure of the tale. To a formal operational child—that is, an early adolescent—the ability to grasp this distinction is, if anything, a contributor to the pleasure of the tale.



The 8- or 9-year old reader of a Hardy Boys Digest finds it easy to understand that someone's rival might play dirty tricks on him; on a less important scale, such things happen even in elementary school. And it is equally self-evident that someone could be tempted to steal something of obvious value. But to explain the actions of a cult member, or a terrorist, or a foreign agent, is more problematical. Do they do what they do because they are inherently evil? Or are they evil because of what they do? The attractive answer to this conundrum is to assimilate an interactive complex of motives to a simpler scheme and decide that they must be bad guys, or else why would they do bad things?

The shift to formal operations is also marked by a sharp increase in what may be termed metacognition, that is, the ability to think

systematically *about* thinking. Unlike the child, the adolescent can understand how such phenomena as self-delusion, unconscious motivation, and subliminal perception are possible. Like the broader social perspective-taking already mentioned, this new ability gives access to a field of possible motives and actions that is barred to the younger reader.

Some examples may help bring these distinctions to life:

In *Wipeout* (HD#96), windsurfer Doug Newman has a series of "accidents" that threaten to put him out of competition for an important trophy. The chief suspect is a rival windsurfer (motive: rivalry), who in fact is responsible for some of the dirty tricks, but the chief bad guys turn out to be a group of counterfeiters who want to recover stolen loot (motive: greed).

In *Trouble at Coyote Canyon* (HD#119), a teen trail ride is plagued by "accidents," apparently the work of a rival camp owner (motive: rivalry). It turns out that the perpetrator is working for a group of graverobbers after Indian artifacts (motive: greed).

In *Carnival of Crime* (HD#122), a traveling carnival is plagued by "accidents," apparently the work of one of the rivals for the management of the carnival (motive: rivalry) but actually perpetrated by the show's business manager as a way of covering his past embezzlements (motive: greed).

I should say, parenthetically, that for the reader, these books are not nearly as similar as this schematic presentation makes them sound. But note that, in each case, both the red herring and the real culprit are given one-dimensional motives.

By way of contrast, consider *Deathgame* (Hardy Casefiles #7), in which the obvious villain is a crazed ex-Green Beret officer who has recruited and trained a group of committed mercenaries. In the end, he is betrayed by his devoted assistant, who both resents his emotional debt to his chief and is tempted by a dictator's lucrative offer to hire the troop of mercenaries. Notice, in particular, the



moral ambiguity of the leader and the complexity of the motives that activate his assistant.

And what about *Toxic Revenge* (Casefiles #83), in which a high school recycling campaign leads to murder? The two chief villains turn out to be the president of a plastics company who tries to disguise (and atone for) illegal dumping by supporting the campaign, and a student politician who covers up for him in part because she fears damage to her political career, but more because she is committed to the success of the recycling project. Once again, there is an element of moral ambiguity that is not to be found in the Digest series. One villain does something worthwhile, but for mostly bad motives, while the other does something bad, but for mostly worthwhile motives.

In summary, the broader social perspective and more complex motivation found in the Hardy Casefiles series, in contrast to the Digest series destined for preadolescent readers, can be understood as a well calibrated accommodation to the cognitive and social development of its readers, as well as perhaps, in some small way, a contributor to that development.

An earlier version of this paper was presented to the Popular Culture Association, Chicago, April 1994.

### BRAVE AND BOLD



Every boy who **prefers variety** in his reading matter, ought to be a reader of **Brave and Bold**. All these were written by authors who are past masters in the art of telling boys' stories. Every tale is complete in itself.

# Electronic Alger? or, Popular Fiction via Modem

Deidre A. Johnson  
West Chester University

Lately the news media have run stories about Internet, the information superhighway—often downplaying its informational aspects in favor of the more sensational ones. Along with titillation, however, a cruise on the Internet can also locate material useful to the study of popular fiction. This article is a preliminary attempt to explore online resources of interest to researchers of dime novels, series books, and pulp magazines.

## *Etexts*

An etext, or electronic text, is a computer file holding the entire text of a book. Three organizations, Project Gutenberg, Online Book Initiative (OBI), and Internet Wiretap, have produced many such files, which can be sent (downloaded) to a personal computer at no charge. Gutenberg, whose goal is a library of 10,000 etexts by the year 2001, already has over 135 documents available. Although its initial efforts concentrated on classics (such as the complete works of Shakespeare), since 1992 it has also acquired popular fiction. It currently provides eleven titles by Edgar Rice Burroughs, three by L. M. Montgomery, two by L. Frank Baum, and two by Gene Stratton Porter. The OBI takes a more casual approach, apparently relying on volunteers who transcribe whatever public domain materials appeal to them. Among its eclectic offerings are Eleanor H. Porter's *Just David* and Horatio Alger, Jr.'s *Cast Upon the Breakers*.

Internet Wiretap has the most extensive holdings, covering almost every imaginable subject: literature, sociology, computers,

music, science, religion, and popular culture. It carries many of the Gutenberg and OBI texts, plus two additional Algers and Stratton Porters and Mary Roberts Rinehart's *Bab: A Sub Deb*. (Bobbie Ann Mason refers to *Bab* in an extended note in *The Girl Sleuth*, calling it "a remarkable little story. . . the spirit of it is at the basis of the popularity of girls' mystery series.") There are also two short question-and-answer essays called FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions). One discusses E. E. "Doc" Smith's Lensman series. The other covers pulp magazines and contains a definition of pulps, a bibliography of secondary sources and fanzines, a list of hero pulps put out by four major publishers (Street & Smith, Popular, Thrilling, and Ace), and information on acquiring indexes for several of these via electronic mail (email). Other items related to popular culture include guides to comic books and cartoons (such as Asterix Annotations and a list of Warner Brothers cartoons), television (including many episode guides), and movies. The complete index to Internet Wiretap's holdings—36 pages of listings—is, of course, also available for downloading.

Although none of the projects as yet offers dime novel or series book texts, they hold enormous potential for establishing an online repository. Electronic texts may lack the look or feel of the actual artifact, but they also facilitate stylistic studies through computer programs that analyze writing styles or word usage. Even cover or internal illustrations can be made available electronically by using scanners to create GIFs (photographic picture files that can be displayed on a computer screen). Project Gutenberg already has one such file for the Tenniel illustrations for *Alice in Wonderland*.

As the 21st century approaches, it brings the possibility of convenient remote access to scarce materials. Horatio Alger and his contemporaries may indeed reach a new generation--through cyberspace.



*Acquiring Etexts*

All of the etexts are available through anonymous ftp.

For Project Gutenberg:

use ftp (file transfer protocol, which is much less intimidating than it sounds), to reach `mrncnext.cso.uiuc.edu`

at the login prompt, type: **anonymous**

at the password prompt, type your email address. For example `djohnson@wcupa.edu`

then type: **cd pub/etext**

**cd etext93**

*Note:* most directory and file names are case sensitive. Don't substitute uppercase letters for lowercase or vice versa. Also, the last digits in most filenames use the arabic zero and one, not uppercase o or lowercase L.

You'll find these texts (filename in parentheses):

TARZAN OF THE APES (`tarzn10.txt`), RETURN OF TARZAN (`tarz210.txt`), BEASTS OF TARZAN (`tarz310.txt`), SON OF TARZAN (`tarz410.txt`), TARZAN JEWELS OF OPAR (`tarz510.txt`), PRINCESS OF MARS (`pmars10.txt`), GODS OF MARS (`gmars10.txt` AND `gmars11.txt`), WARLORD OF MARS (`wmars10.txt` and `wmars11.txt`), THUVIA MAID OF MARS (`mmars10.txt`), ANNE OF THE ISLAND (`iland10.txt`), WIZARD OF OZ (`wizoz10.txt`), LAND OF OZ (`ozland10.txt`)

To retrieve a text, type `get` and the filename (without the parentheses). For example, to get TARZAN OF THE APES, type: **get tarzn10.txt**

To disconnect once the transfer is completed, type: **quit**

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For ANNE OF GREEN GABLES (anne10.txt and anne11.txt) and ANNE OF AVONLEA (avon10.txt), instead of typing cd etext93, type: **cd etext92**

For FRECKLES (freck10.txt), GIRL OF THE LIMBERLOST (limbr10.txt), AT THE EARTH'S CORE (ecore10.txt), and JUNGLE TALES OF TARZAN (tarz610.txt), instead of typing cd etext93, type: **cd etext94**

OBI files are available at ftp.uu.net

Use the same login procedure, then type:

**cd docs/literary/obi/Horatio.Alger.Jr**

**get Cast.Upon.the.Breakers**

or

**cd docs/literary/obi/Eleanor.H.Porter**

**get Just.David**

To disconnect once the transfer is completed, type: **quit**

Internet Wiretap files are available at 130.43.43.43

Use the same login procedure, then type:

**cd Library**

**cd Classic**

You'll find these texts (filename in parentheses):

RAGGED DICK (ragged.txt), STRUGGLING UPWARD (strugup.txt), AT THE FOOT OF THE RAINBOW (rainbow.gsp), THE SONG OF THE CARDINAL (cardinal.gsp), BAB: A SUB-DEB (subdeb.txt)

To get a text, type: **get** and the filename (without the parentheses)

For the pulp article, instead of typing `cd Classic`

type: **cd Media/Books**

**get alt.pulp.FAQ**

For the Lensman article, instead of typing `cd Classic`

type: **cd Media/Sci-Fi**

**get lensman.FAQ**

For the index, instead of typing `cd Library`

type: **cd About**

**get library.index**

To logoff once the transfer is completed, type: **quit**

*Note:* some systems require that you specify a local drive on your computer. If you receive an error message, try typing **lcd** (lower case l, followed by cd) and the drive that you want to receive the files, for example **lcd a:**

Happy downloading!

[*Editor's Note:* Anyone with information (and an email account) can send email to Deidre Johnson: [djohnson@wcu.bitnet](mailto:djohnson@wcu.bitnet) or to your editor at [cox@stolaf.edu](mailto:cox@stolaf.edu). The above article was sent electronically through the Internet to your editor's office computer. Who would have dreamed, nearly a century and a half ago, when the first dime novel was published that the transmission of information (or entertainment) would have been so changed in the future? To quote a passage from *Frank Reade, Jr.'s New Electric Submarine Boat, the "Explorer"*; or, *To the North Pole Under the Ice* (Frank Reade Library No. 17, p. 10): "'Upon my word,' he cried, 'this surpasses any effort of the imagination!'" ]



## OUR POPULAR PUBLISHERS

### No. 2: STREET & SMITH

One of the five major dime novel publishers, Street & Smith was founded when Francis Scott Street and Francis Shubael Smith entered into partnership to purchase Amos J. Williamson's *New York Weekly Dispatch*. With Street as business manager and Smith writing much of the copy, they transformed the new paper into the long-running story paper, the *New York Weekly*. Traditionally, the date for the founding of the firm is 1855, but the names of F. S. Street and F. S. Smith did not appear on the masthead until May 21, 1859. Beginning with quarters at 22 Beekman Street, they soon moved to 11 Frankfort Street. By the 1890's they were operating at 29 and 31 Rose Street as well as 2 Duane Street and 81 Fulton Street. In 1905 they moved from 238 Williams Street to a new building, designed and built for the publishers, on Seventh Avenue.

While the *New York Weekly* was the mainstay of the publishing firm, Street & Smith experimented with other types of publications issuing the *Mammoth Monthly Reader* (1873), the *Select Series* (1887), the *Secret Service Series* (1887), the *Sea and Shore Series* (1888), and the *Far and Near Series* (1888), drawing on the resources of the *Weekly* to supply the contents of the new papercovered novels. In 1889, they entered the dime novel publishing field with two titles that combined well-chosen reprints with new material, the *Log Cabin Library* and the *Nugget Library*. One of their contributions to the genre was the introduction of a larger, clearer typeface that made Street & Smith publications distinctive in an era of small, dense type.

Unfortunately, neither of the founders lived to see the addition of the dime novel publication empire. Street, having sold his

interest in the firm, died in 1883 and Smith in 1887. By 1889, the company was controlled entirely by the Smith family, Francis Smith's sons, Ormand Gerald Smith and Gerald Campbell Smith.

During the dime novel era, the major authors published by Street & Smith included Horatio Alger, Jr., Annie Ashmore, Charlotte Braeme (later to be better known as "Bertha M. Clay"), Frederic Van Rensselaer Dey, Theodore Dreiser, Col. Prentiss Ingraham, Edward Zane Carroll Judson, William George Patten (Gilbert Patten), Upton Sinclair, Ann S. Stephens, and Edward Stratemeyer.

Street & Smith survived the demise of the dime novel by diversifying and trying new formats of fiction that appealed to the twentieth century reader. In 1902, the firm purchased the reprint rights to stories originally published by its one-time competitors, including Beadle & Adams, George Munro, Norman L. Munro, and Frank Tousey. They issued publications under imprints other than Street & Smith, Howard, Ainslee & Co, the Winner Library, Westbury, and Chelsea House. A number of their publications supplied the contents of clothbound series books issued by David McKay of Philadelphia, including a set of Frank Merriwell books.

The Smith family guided the publishing company through the dime novel era and the transition to the pulp era following the first World War. Street & Smith remained in the Smith family until 1955 when Gerald Hewitt Smith, son of Ormond Smith, died. In 1960, Street & Smith was absorbed by the Conde Nast Publications, the publishers of *Vogue* and other fashion magazines. A decade later, the publishers's archives, including file copies of publications, correspondence and manuscripts were bought by Sam Newhouse, and donated to the library at Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York.

**BOOKS** under review are either newly released, or soon-to-be released titles.

### **Judy Bolton Returns!**

Margaret Sutton. *The Vanishing Shadow* and *The Haunted Attic*. Bedford, MA: Applewood Books. \$12.95 each. The first two volumes of one of the most successful mystery series for girls have been reissued in facsimiles of the original editions of 1932. These are sturdy attractive editions, complete with the original illustrations by Pelagie Doane and dust jackets that emulate the originals. The author has supplied a brief autobiographical introduction. Based on events in the life of their author and often dealing with social issues, the Judy Bolton stories have appealed to readers and collectors for decades. The characters were allowed to grow in the course of the series which extended from 1932 to 1967. This new edition is worthy of a place on every series book reader's shelves and we hope it will receive the support it deserves so there will be more titles added in the future.

jrc

### **Nancy Drew Anew!**

Simon & Schuster has just launched another Nancy Drew series, the *Nancy Drew Notebooks*. Aimed at 6 to 8-year-olds (the same group who eagerly devour the *Babysitter's Little Sister* series), the books show 8-year-old Nancy—still accompanied by Bess and George—at the start of her detecting career as she solves mysteries for her friends and schoolmates. The series takes its name from a gift Carson Drew gives Nancy in the first volume, a special notebook for writing down clues. The first two titles, slated for September publication under the Minstrel Books imprint, are *The*



*Slumber Party Secret* and *The Lost Locket*.

This is not the first time a publisher has tried to revamp Nancy Drew for younger readers. Grosset & Dunlap's *Nancy Drew Picture Book* series (1977) featured a teenage Nancy whose clients were young children. The current series utilizes a tactic successfully employed by the *Sweet Valley Kids* series (a spinoff of *Sweet Valley High*), which premiered in 1989.

Deidre A. Johnson  
West Chester University

### **Pulps in Reprint**

*Pulp Review*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (September 1994) \$6.00 a copy from The Pulp Collector Press, P.O. Box 3232, Frederick, MD 21705.

The usual well-chosen and produced issue with more vintage detective fiction of 60 years ago. "The Suicide Squad—Dead or Alive!" by Emile Tepperman (*Ace G-Man Stories*, April 1940); "House of a Thousand Deaths," by Walter F. Ripperger (*Ten Detective Aces*, April 1934); and "The Tomb's Secret," by Robert E. Howard (*Strange Detective Stories*, February 1934), reproduced in facsimile. Colored cover by Norman Saunders for *Spicy Mystery Stories*, October 1935. Collectors should note that the next issue (vol. 3, no. 5, whole no. 18) will be a facsimile edition of the first novel in the Operator #5 series from 1936. It should be out by the time you read this notice. We will review it in the December *Dime Novel Round-Up*.

jrc

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### **WANTED**

Roy Rockwood Great Marvel Series (*The City Beyond the Clouds*, etc.), Jack Hawkaway books, and tobacco card albums.

J. Koster                      21 Sherwood Drive      Massena, NY 13662  
(315) 769-6968

## APPLAUSE FOR EDDIE

"For most of the twenty years of **Tip Top**'s existence the Applause was tremendously popular and was read by the fans with as much interest as the stories themselves. It imparted a personal touch that seemed to unite the readers, publishers, author and characters into a sort of big happy family."

J. P. Guinon

*Dime Novel Round-Up*, January 15, 1960

This statement from an article about the famous letter column in *Tip Top Weekly* seems to your editor an appropriate opening for a special letter column in this issue of the *Dime Novel Round-Up*. We wish to thank Eddie LeBlanc for the confidence he placed in us to succeed him and share with you some of the comments received in this office at the announcement that he had decided to retire as editor after 42 years on the job.

Many thanks for another great year of *Dime Novel Round-Up*.

Digges LaTouche  
Lambert, NJ

Just a note to thank you for the years of good reading we enjoyed in the Roundup. Take care,

Gil O'Gara  
Des Moines, IA

Special thanks for your 42 years of editing the *Dime Novel Round-Up*. That is some kind of record! The continued interest in Dime Novels is in a great part due to your efforts. Best wishes for the future,

Fred K. Fox  
Delhi, CA

Time to renew again—thanks so much for all that you have done—your steadfastness & encouragement have carried us through the years.

Bob George  
Cleveland, TN

You've done a great job. It's been a great magazine.

Alex T. Shaner  
San Jose, CA

Heartiest best wishes on your retirement as publisher of DNR...I hope you'll now be able to devote more time to writing and lecturing, maybe even your own oral history of Dime Novels, series books, etc. You still have *so much* to give that all of us need!

Ralph Gardner  
New York City

We would also like to thank the many who took time to write your new editor to extend best wishes, among them: Keith Thompson (Bellport, NY), Gil O'Gara, Victor Berch (Marlboro, MA), Don Steinhauer (Nescopeck, PA). The following letter from a long-time subscriber sums up so much of the feeling about what this little magazine and its previous editors have meant to so many:

You are indeed to be congratulated on taking over what has become one of the most distinguished amateur magazines in America, the penultimate source of information about dime novels. I dealt with both Ralph Cummings and Edward LeBlanc and have nothing but positive things to say about them. My relationship with LeBlanc goes back to the fifties, and he was a major factor in building my dime novel collection specializing in futuristic things, including air flight and lost races. Between Cummings and



LeBlanc I completed my set of *Dime Novel Round-Up*, their bibliographical publications and most other dime novel amateur magazines.

Originally, subscribers to *Dime Novel Round-Up* were men who had read the papers while growing up. But time has reduced their numbers and you are right in including pulp magazines in your coverage, but since the pulp magazine died for all practical purposes in 1955, even those readers are scarcely youngsters any more.

Sam Moskowitz  
Newark, NJ

"On my last public appearance  
I was hanged by the neck until dead!"

## SPEAK OF THE DEVIL

A LONG-LOST IMPOSSIBLE CRIME MYSTERY  
by JOHN DICKSON CARR

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## NOTES & QUERIES

For years Ralph Cummings had a column in the *Dime Novel Round-Up* called "Newsy News," in which he reported informally on matters pertaining to dime novels and the Happy Hours Brotherhood. This is your editor's answer to that column. Material (either in the form of a note or a query) should be submitted directly to your editor.

**What's in a Name?** There seems to be no clear definition of "dime novels." We hear the term used loosely to cover any cheap, papercovered fiction, of any era. Recently we heard them referred to as "dime store novels." Should we be concerned?

Browsing through back issues of this magazine, we find many articles on some topics, but very few (if any) on others. For instance, is anyone interested in contributing an article on the dialect humor stories of Frank Tousey (the Muldoon stories or the Shorty series)? We haven't seen any articles on bandits and highwaymen for some time either. Where are the articles on our Penny Dreadful counterparts? Bill Lofts contributed some classic articles in the past which are worth rereading.

Readers who enjoyed Clark Evans' fine discussion of *Maum Guinea* by Metta Victor in our last issue may be interested to learn they don't have to search for the original *Beadle's Dime Novel* in order to read the book. *Maum Guinea* is still in print and available as part of the Black Heritage Library Collection, published by Books for Libraries, Freeport, NY (ISBN 0-8369-9087-0), at \$17.00. The distributor is Ayer Publications, P.O. Box 958, Salem, NH 03079. Another title of interest in that series is *Hatchie, the Guardian Slave; or, The Heiress of Bellevue. A Tale*

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*of the Mississippi and the Southwest*, by William T. Adams, originally published in 1852.

**Misguided Information Dept.** Recently, while browsing through the 19th volume in the *Encyclopedia USA* (Academic International Press, 1994), we encountered this statement: "Deadwood Dick. A fictional character created by Edward Zane Carroll Judson (1823-1886) under the alias Edward L. Wheeler." Say it isn't so!

Comic strips are not usually our topics in this magazine, unless we are discussing the appearances of dime novel characters in the Street & Smith comic books of the 1940s or the *Frank Merriwell at Yale* series from Charlton in the 1950s. However, one of our subscribers, Norman Hale, is the author of a book called *All Natural Pogo* (New York: Thinker's Books) in which he discusses the famous Walt Kelly comic strip and its characters in terms of the way they exhibit "natural" behavior patterns, as animals. Write Norman at 110 Bank Street, Apt 2H, New York, NY 10014 for more details.

Radio drama is also somewhat tangential to our concerns, but we feel that a book advertised elsewhere in this issue (*Speak of the Devil*, by John Dickson Carr) has an appeal for some of us. Set in Regency England (1815), this 8-part radio-play features the mysterious manifestations of a young woman who was executed for a brutal murder the previous year. "On my last public appearance," she explains, "I was hanged by the neck until dead!" It seems to us that the world of the old time gothic thriller and penny dreadful that preceded that of the dime novel could find no finer interpretation than that of the master of historical detective fiction, John Dickson Carr.



And while we are mentioning advertisements, we would like to take this opportunity to mention Michael Canick's advertisement in our last issue which has to date yielded no fruit. Mr. Canick is working on an annotated bibliography of fiction related to stage magic and magicians and is anxious to locate dime novels, series books and pulp magazine stories on this subject. We have already been in correspondence with him about the work of Maxwell Grant [Walter B. Gibson]. Write him at 300 Mercer Street, #9J, New York, NY 10003.

Some of you know that your editor is hard at work on a massive project, a one volume encyclopedia of the dime novel. Recently we were searching through the back files of this magazine (aided by Michael Cook's index to its first 50 years) for information on Norman L. Munro's story paper, *Golden Hours*. (We are also much in debt to Don Steinhauer for his fine bibliographic listing of *Golden Hours*.) It was by means of these reference tools that we learned of the serial, "*Golden Hours* Camping Out Club in the Adirondacks; or, Writers on a Racket," by John DeMorgan (*GH* 651-660, July 21-September 22, 1900), which includes a full page *illustration* of the staff writers for the story paper! It is always a joy to discover information on the real people behind the fiction we discuss in these pages.

New subscriber, Ed Lauterbach, is looking for a copy of a boys' book about a dirigible called *Z R Wins* which he thinks was published by Saalfeld or Goldsmith. Does anyone remember this, the correct title, and the author? His address is 700 North Chauncey, West Lafayette, IN 47906.

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**Dime Novel Sketches** series by Edward T. LeBlanc

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